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# THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE AMERICAN CONTINENT—SOME PHASES OF THE MONROE DOCTRINE

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Consideration of the political position of the United States on the American continent must inevitably entail some discussion of the Monroe doctrine, for our attitude and interests have largely been evolved and determined by the development of this famous declaration. Fundamentally, the Monroe doctrine is our expression of the national right to self-defence. Sooner or later a doctrine or policy identical in spirit if not in form would have been enunciated even had Monroe and Adams never lived. The Monroe doctrine was not the result of one man's mind and effort, nor the development of one day or of one decade. It grew up slowly and expanded into vigorous being during the first quarter of the last century. The menace of the Holy Alliance and the fact that England's interest in combating its possible operations in the New World were identical with our own made necessary a strong expression from this country and gave to that pronouncement the power and prestige which it instantly achieved. The impending dangers which caused the promulgation of the Monroe doctrine passed away with the dissolution of the Holy Alliance. For many years little or nothing was heard of our so-called policy. When Polk invoked it in 1848 the danger of considerable European aggressions upon this continent had not for a long period caused serious apprehension. There was apparently no talk as there was no question of colonization in the New World by European powers, nor any active attempt on their part to extend their political system to this continent.

In his annual message of December 2, 1845, President Polk, referring to the dispute between this country and Great Britain as to the Oregon territory and to the possible intervention of European powers in consequence of our annexation of Texas, aimed to give to that paragraph of the doctrine dealing with colonization a meaning

popularly but erroneously conveyed by the expression "no more European colonies on this continent," but in using it he restricted its application to North America, saying that "it should be distinctly announced to the world as our settled policy that no future European colony or dominion shall, with our consent, be planted or established on any part of the North-American continent."

It will here be seen that President Polk gave a new and extended meaning to Monroe's declaration against colonization. He pronounced against the establishment of any dominion on the North-American continent by European power, a term which, of course, includes the acquisition of territory by voluntary transfer or by conquest of colonies or territories already occupied. Three years later President Polk reasserted his doctrine in a special message to Congress, called forth by an Indian depredation in Yucatan which led the authorities to offer to transfer "the dominion and sovereignty to the United States," and at the same time to make a similar offer to Great Britain and Spain. President Polk, in urging the occupation of the territory by the United States, declared that "we could not consent to a transfer of this dominion and sovereignty to either Spain, Great Britain, or any other European power." This presentation surpassed the Monroe doctrine in all of its parts. The Monroe doctrine was based upon the right of the American states, whose independence we had acknowledged, to dispose of themselves as they saw fit. It was directed against the interposition of European powers and aimed to control their designs against the New World. Mr. Adams, in his graphic, felicitous manner, expressed this notion in his diary, as follows:

"Considering the South Americans as independent nations, they themselves and no other nation had the right to dispose of their condition. We have no right to dispose of them, either alone or in conjunction with other nations. Neither have any other nations the right of disposing of them without their consent."

The doctrine of President Polk, however, forbade the acquisition of dominion in North America, either by voluntary transfer or cession. It is obvious that President Polk, in invoking the Monroe doctrine in the sense in which he sought to apply it, was endeavoring to strengthen his position in respect to annexation which was formidably opposed in some sections of this country.

That his attention and interest were centred upon this feature is indicated by the fact that in 1846 he abandoned his claim to the Oregon territory and agreed to a settlement of the boundary at 49 degrees instead of at the line of "54-40 or fight," to which he had previously announced our title to be unquestionable.<sup>1</sup>

*Growth of the Monroe Doctrine.*

The Monroe doctrine to-day gathers its strength as a vital American policy from the support and life which the power and efficiency of the United States breathes into it. It will have effect and command respect and be carefully considered and weighed just as long as we are in position to back it up with men and guns. This view is not lacking in historical support. In 1862-63, during the gloomy days of our civil war, when the energies of the government were centred in the desperate struggle for the life of the Union, it became evident that France was preparing for activity in Mexico, and that her armies were being used to set up a monarchical form of government, contrary to the wishes and desires of the people of that country. It was not possible for us at that moment to go to war with France; hence we had to content ourselves with a rather mild protest against the aggressive act of the French Emperor. A few years later, however—in 1865—the close of the great war of the rebellion left in this country two vast armies under the leadership of some of the foremost generals of the world. Owing to the fact that this formidable military force could easily have been turned against the invaders in Mexico, it took only a slight hint from Mr. Seward, coupled with a mere allusion to the salient principles of the Monroe doctrine, to cause the immediate withdrawal of the imperial troops from the soil of Mexico, a step which speedily led to the collapse of the exotic monarchical government.

*The Case of Santo Domingo.*

Again, during the period of our civil war certain Spanish politicians intrigued with the revolutionary party in Santo Domingo, and secured the offer to the Queen of Spain of the sovereignty over that island. Our administration, while it deplored the action of the

<sup>1</sup>"The Monroe Doctrine." J. B. Moore.

Spanish government, did not feel itself in position to make a strong or impassioned appeal to the Monroe doctrine, for it knew very well that we could not afford at that moment to quarrel with Spain over the sovereignty of Santo Domingo or any other island.

Mr. Seward said, in his instructions to Mr. Carl Schurz, then Minister to Spain:

"You are authorized and instructed to call the attention of the Spanish government to the subject, and, in such manner as you can adopt without impropriety, urge the necessity of a prompt and satisfactory explanation."

Later our diplomatic representative at Madrid, Mr. Preston, protested in a strenuous fashion against the absorption of the Dominican republic by Spain. His note to the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs deserves resurrection from the archives of the Department of State. Said Mr. Preston to the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs:

"The government of Her Majesty has declared the Dominican republic reincorporated with the monarchy.

"For forty years the Government of the United States has avowed its determination to resist any attempt to re-establish monarchical power over the republics of the New World, believing it essential to their independence and prosperity as well as to the interests and just rights of the United States to leave them free from all such intervention. It has always declared its intention to show a sacred regard for the remaining possessions of the European powers in America, and it has faithfully fulfilled that pledge. It made this declaration when Spain was torn by civil war and unable to defend her possessions in America against external force or ambition, and it was then acquiesced in, as a rule of justice and a welcome evidence of our friendship. It has manifested its sincerity by effective efforts to repress hostile expeditions against Cuba, and by letting its citizens perish in silence because they attempted to violate the rights of Spain. It has equally resisted any claim on the part of England, though under the color of ancient treaties, to establish any protectorate, found any new colony, or annex new territory in Central America.

"Spain, well knowing this policy, has constantly declared to the United States that it had forever abandoned all thoughts of re-establishing its power over its former possessions in America.

"Rumors having reached the government of the United States that designs existed for the re-annexation of Santo Domingo and Mexico, by means of intrigues with factions in those countries, the undersigned, in October last, demanded from the government an explanation and received the most satisfactory assurances that no thought was entertained of reconquering or re-establishing the power of Spain over her former dominions in America.

"Even within the last month your excellency assured me of the surprise felt by the government of Her Majesty at the events in Santo Domingo, though now, by the exposition of the Council of Ministers which precedes the decree, it appears that the measure has been long meditated and designed, and that Her Majesty, strongly moved by the wishes of the people of Dominica, has only been prevented from yielding to their desire by overpowering reasons of state.

"The exposition of the Council of Ministers does not specify what the reasons of state are which restrained the government of Spain for so many years in refusing to yield to the wishes of the people of Dominica and the Queen, but the coincidence of events shows, and the exposition of the Ministry admits, that they were of overpowering force for many years while my country was strong, rich, and united, and have utterly disappeared within the last month since it has been unhappily involved in civil war.

"The government of the United States felt that from its neighborhood, its commerce, and its power it had a just right to make such demands and receive such assurances.

"England, from its right of vicinity, based upon its possession of Gibraltar, recently demanded and required that Spain, before she would be permitted to make war upon Morocco, should give assurances that no conquest or objectionable annexation of territory should be made. Your excellency yielded to the demand and fulfilled the promise. The commerce of the United States in the Gulf of Mexico is greater by far than that of England in the Mediterranean, its territory indefinitely more vast, and its just right to intervene for the protection of its material interests more direct. We have received assurances equally satisfactory, but within this month they have been utterly violated.

"The annexation of the island professes to be in conformity with the will of the people, and upon this the exposition chiefly relies for support. The facts are that the Spanish troops and vessels were present simultaneously with the declaration of President Santana that the island was transferred to Spain, and that even now the government will have to send half as many troops as there are male inhabitants in the republic to quell the civil war which has broken out to resist the transfer of the republic by its chief. Still greater evils must ensue from the inevitable conflict with the people of Haiti, and the whole island will soon be subjected to the horrors of war. An act to annex the island under such circumstances, after an interval of eighteen days without the recognition of the revolution by any other power—a revolution in which the governors betray the governed and extinguish the government in utter violation of their trust—is termed an evidence of the free and spontaneous will of the people and the result of their unawed suffrages.

"Under these circumstances the undersigned, as the representative of the government of the United States, protests against the seizure of the Dominican republic by Spain and informs your excellency that his government will consider itself free to resist the measure by all the means at its command, considering that Spain does not hold the island by the free will of its people,

but only occupies it without just right by military force. The government of the United States will never consent that Spain shall re-establish her dominion over the republics of the New World by supporting factions or parties within them or attempting to control their destiny. The undersigned declares that his government will never regard the republic of Dominica as a lawful acquisition by Spain, but a mere hostage, betrayed by its friends and seized by a former master, to be released hereafter by any generous hand whenever fortune presents an opportunity.

"The undersigned will communicate the final resolutions of Her Majesty's government to the government at Washington, but a proper sense of the interest and honor of his country compels him to withdraw from Spain until its course of action is decided."

Mr. Seward, on the same subject, addressed this language to the Spanish Minister in Washington :

"The President would not willingly believe that these proceedings have been authorized by your [government], and . . . I inform you in a direct manner that if they should be found to have received the sanction of that government the President will be obliged to regard them as manifesting an unfriendly spirit toward the United States and to meet the further prosecution of enterprises of that kind, in regard to either the Dominican republic or to any part of the American continent or islands, with a prompt, persistent, and, if possible, effective resistance."

It will thus be seen that our representative at Madrid was fully alive to the exigencies of the situation and that he acted with energy and promptness. He was not, however, sustained with equal vigor by the administration, and it does not appear that his note and his action received more than perfunctory approval at Washington. This can be readily understood, for the war cloud, with all its fury, had burst over this country and no one was disposed to give immediate heed to Spain or her operations in Santo Domingo. Before the time arrived in which we were prepared to demand satisfactory explanations from Spain another revolution occurred in the Dominican republic and a democratic form of government was re-established.

### *Modern European Views of the Monroe Doctrine.*

Probably the most startling appeal to the Monroe doctrine was that made by President Cleveland in the case of the boundary dispute between Venezuela and England. There are, of course, two

strongly conflicting opinions as to the wisdom of our course in invoking the Monroe doctrine in the Venezuela boundary case. The view which generally obtained abroad concerning President Cleveland's message was that it was not justified. It was held that England was not trying to control the destiny of Venezuela nor endeavoring to establish new colonies there.

Many persons in this country thought the point at issue was simply a boundary dispute involving questions of geography and history and leading possibly to an ultimate change of ownership of tropical lands sparsely settled and likely to remain so, while it was assumed abroad that Mr. Cleveland expected both parties to the boundary dispute to accept his suggestions concerning arbitration.

Our government at that time seems to have held that through unjust or arbitrary modification of the boundaries of its colonial possessions on the American continent a European state might seriously curtail the territory of an American republic and in this manner gravely affect its destiny.

I do not think it was maintained by Mr. Cleveland or Mr. Olney that Great Britain would be bound to acquiesce in the decision regarding Venezuela's eastern boundary line which the commission appointed by himself might reach. "The sole purpose of that commission," says a partisan of Mr. Cleveland's course, "was to enlighten the conscience of our executive and the American people at large touching the Venezuelan question; whether the British occupation of territory was, as the Venezuelans alleged, purely arbitrary, or whether it was founded in international law and equity. Had the commission reported in favor of the British claim, the United States would have declined to assist Venezuela in repelling British aggression. Only in the event of the commission finding the British claim unfounded should we have felt it our duty to say that Great Britain must choose between arbitration and war."

It may be of interest at this point to note what leaders of modern thought in Europe think of the Monroe doctrine in general and of its application to the Venezuelan boundary case in particular. A distinguished French jurist and writer has recently published a book,<sup>2</sup> in which he formulates what plainly is the view of Continental Europe in respect to this country and its interpretation of Monroe's policy.

<sup>2</sup>"Les Etats-Unis et la Doctrine de Monroe." Hector Pétin.



Referring to the Venezuelan boundary dispute he declares that, in this connection, the Monroe doctrine had no bearing; that it had no more concern with the matter at issue than has theology with a question of mathematics. He thinks the enthusiastic reception of President Cleveland's message by a majority of the American people was a wholly ridiculous spectacle, and from the point of view of an international lawyer he finds the state of affairs at the meeting of the Paris tribunal of arbitration to be quite beyond comprehension. The treaty of arbitration, says the author, was an intervention between two states, one of which, it is useless to deny, had no reason whatsoever to figure in the question of arbitration. "It was a discussion of territory under the sovereignty of Venezuela and not under that of the United States. Yet the treaty was made between the latter country and England. In this manner the United States availed itself of a means and a vehicle of justice to put into execution an intervention which was absolutely illegal."

"The precedent," Dr. Pétin declares, "is very important in that it forces Europe to accept arbitration in the adjustment of boundary lines with American states and marks an ominous advance in the development of the Monroe doctrine." The stand taken by the United States in the Anglo-Venezuelan affair, it is extravagantly asserted, if consistently sustained, morally binds the United States to protect all American states and to act as arbitrator, and it is just one more step along this line of development, declares the French author, for the United States, in pursuance of the new interpretation of the Monroe doctrine, to drive European powers entirely out of America. And indeed this last step was taken, the critic thinks, when the United States decided upon intervention in the Cuban war. He naturally shares the continental view of that struggle and is wholly unable to credit the disinterestedness of the United States in espousing the cause of the Cubans, although he is compelled to acknowledge, after much scathing criticism of our course, that legally we had a right to interfere on grounds of humanity. As an outcome of the Cuban war, the acquisition of the Philippines is denounced by the critic as a bold stroke on the part of the United States, beyond the pale of all law and beyond the most extreme application of the Monroe doctrine. Yet in fairness he makes the acknowledgment that the results of the so-called American aggression have been in the interests of good government and of humanity.

Since the days of the Panama congress our French critic sees in the course of the United States and its interpretation of the Monroe doctrine little beyond an exhibition of the utter selfishness of this country. He says the smaller American states were early given to understand that not only were they to abandon all idea of receiving assistance and protection from the United States, but that they might even fear oppression from this country itself.

He finds in the attitude of the United States toward Yucatan a further emphatic example of this new phase of the Monroe doctrine. "In denying to Yucatan the right of its people to dispose of themselves the United States flagrantly violated the principles of international law, and from the early policies of Monroe, 'America for the Americans,' President Polk developed a policy of 'America for the North Americans!'"

I have quoted this last paragraph because it illustrates in a clear and truthful way the opinion respecting the United States and its ultimate purposes held by an intelligent, alert, but small minority in several of the Latin-American countries. This view was made unpleasantly apparent at times during the Spanish-American war, and there seemed to be, in places, a determined effort to create in the minds of uninformed people the fear and belief that the United States meant to set forth upon a policy of conquest which would involve the absorption of all the weaker nations on this hemisphere.

It is just to say, however, that in no instance was this ridiculous, though somewhat widespread, notion ever put forward, sustained, or suggested by any South or Central American government.

"Polk," continues the eminent French critic of the Monroe doctrine, "denied the right of a people to dispose of themselves. All of his successors, imbued with these same ideas, have applied the new doctrine in the same sense, making all bow before the egoistic interests of the United States. The doctrine thus transformed admits of no other interpretation. Just as in ancient times everything gave way before the Roman citizen, and in later times before the British subject, so now must everything give way before the citizen of the United States. In the first two instances imperialism holds sway and in the last Monroeism. To control the economic keys of the world is imperialism; to grasp the economic keys of America is Monroeism. The only difference in the two policies lies in the extent of their respective application. The limit of imperialism is the uni-

verse; the limit of Monroeism is America. The Spanish-Cuban war gave the people of the United States great advantages. Their victories transformed them into a great power. The conference of The Hague did even more. It recognized the Monroe doctrine. And without raising the question of the contradiction between the policy of imperialism pursued in the Philippines and the policy of Monroeism declared at the conference of The Hague, Europe permitted the United States to proclaim, once for all, 'the world and America for the Americans!'

This exposition of the Monroe doctrine which I have just quoted will seem extreme and even fantastic, as no doubt in a sense it is, but nevertheless it represents a view of us and of our policy which is very widely entertained, and as such must be considered and soberly reckoned with. To me it seems more and more essential, as our intercourse with other nations grows, and as our interests more closely touch and affect their interests, that we should earnestly strive to comprehend fully the point of view of every other independent nation upon international matters. It is of importance to know what Europe thinks of the Monroe doctrine and the new meaning given to it from time to time.

### *Collection of Debts Historically Considered.*

The Monroe doctrine is not international law and we have never claimed that it was. It is the fervent expression of an American policy—one that has grown to be part of the life and thought of the nation. Its strength lies, to a considerable extent, in its flexibility and in the wisdom which causes us to refrain from attempting to define it with precision and to draw it within specified metes and bounds. One sentence of President Monroe's message is still a good deal pondered throughout the civilized world. It is this: "But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them or controlling in any other manner their destiny by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States." The phrase "for the purpose of oppressing them" may involve much of potential danger. Divers constructions

are put upon it, and it is scanned from many points of view. We say it means what it says, or, more precisely, that it conveys the meaning which was given, it by Monroe and his colleagues when the message was written. To many thoughtful men south of us it means or seems to mean quite another thing. Certain Latin-American statesmen, men of much erudition and keen intellectual insight, construe this phrase to mean that no coercive measures may be exercised by European or other countries for the purpose of compelling payment of just debts of any sort. Their view of this phase of the Monroe doctrine is held more generally than is supposed. It has very lately been made the basis of important diplomatic correspondence between this country and one of the foremost republics of South America, a republic which, like several of its neighbors, is progressive, liberal, prosperous, and orderly, and which does not seek to evade any just obligations. President Roosevelt has declared upon more than one occasion with admirable lucidity and emphasis that we will not shield any nation from the consequences of wrongdoing. This is his answer and the answer of the American government and people to the suggestion that it is a violation of the Monroe doctrine to employ force against an American republic for the purpose of obtaining respectful consideration of just debts or of redressing real grievances. The only limitation which we put upon this expression is that there shall be no attempt on the part of the coercive power to acquire or permanently to control in any way the territory or destiny of an American republic. There was nothing in President Monroe's declaration to warrant anyone, so far as I can see, in inferring that when he spoke of the oppressing of American governments he referred to the collection of debts. Professor J. B. Moore says the idea that the employment of force to collect debts was contrary to the Monroe doctrine has its origin in Wharton's *International Law Digest*. In the section entitled "Monroe doctrine" the following sentence occurs:

"The government of the United States would regard with grave anxiety an attempt on the part of France to force by hostile pressure the payment by Venezuela of her debt to French citizens."

The authorities cited for this statement are two alleged instructions written by Mr. Blaine to our Minister at Paris in 1881. The whole matter, however, is incorrectly stated. Both instructions are

published in the volume of foreign relations for that year, and they refer not to hostile pressure, but to a rumored design on the part of France of taking forcible possession of some of the harbors and a portion of the territory of Venezuela in compensation of debts due to citizens of the French republic, and nowhere occurs the erroneous paragraph cited, nor is mention made of the Monroe doctrine. The instructions merely urge that such a proceeding as that reported to be in contemplation would be unjust to other creditors of Venezuela, including the United States, since it would deprive them of a part of their security, and they express the solicitude of the government of the United States "for the object of averting hostilities between two republics for which it feels the most sincere and enduring friendship." It is plain, observes Professor Moore, that this conception of the Monroe doctrine, based upon the erroneous passage in Wharton's Digest, has no actual foundation whatever; and he takes occasion to state in this connection that the British proceedings at Corinto in no way involved either the Monroe doctrine or President Polk's interpretation of it. We have never undertaken to say that European powers should not settle their differences with the American republics by the use of force any more than we ourselves would abjure the right to employ it in extreme cases. In 1861 we made no objections to the demonstrations of the allies against Mexico for the purpose of collecting debts until it became evident that France had an ulterior purpose in her intention, namely, to establish a monarchical form of government.

In 1842 and 1844 Great Britain established a blockade of the port of San Juan, Nicaragua, and in 1851 she put an embargo on the traffic of the port of La Union in Salvador, at the same time declaring the whole country in a state of blockade. In 1862 and 1863 Great Britain seized Brazilian vessels as an act of reprisal. The ports of Mexico were blockaded in 1838 by France to obtain redress for unsatisfied claims. In 1845 ports on the coast of Buenos Ayres were blockaded by France and Great Britain for the purpose of bringing about the independence of Uruguay. For many years, beginning in 1865, Spain was at war with republics on the coast of South America, and the city of Valparaiso was fiercely bombarded by a Spanish fleet. A United States man-of-war in 1831 attacked and dispersed a pirate colony from Buenos Ayres on the Falkland Islands and set at liberty some of our citizens who had been arrested

and detained there for killing seals on the coast. In 1846 we went to war with Mexico; and in 1854 the commander of one of our men-of-war bombarded Greytown, and as a result secured an indemnity of \$24,000 for the seizure and destruction of property, and obtained an apology for an insult to the American minister on the part of some of the inhabitants of the place. After the bombardment, in order to inculcate a lesson never to be forgotten, the naval commander burned all the buildings that were left standing. In 1859 we sent an expedition to obtain redress from Paraguay. In 1890, while the Pan-American Conference was in session, Congress passed an act to authorize the President to use force to collect a claim from Chile, and two years later we sent to that country an ultimatum to which she gave due heed.

*Some Recent Discussion.*

A French publicist professes to see in President Roosevelt's recent speech at Chicago a further extension of the Monroe doctrine. Attention is directed by the French writer to the word "control" as used by the President when he says "the acquisition of any control is really equivalent to territorial aggrandizement." The French view is that a serious dispute may arise as to the construction to be put upon the seizure of custom-houses of one of the debtor nations by the naval or military forces of a European power for the purpose of assessing or collecting fines or securing payment for just debts long overdue, and concerning which no satisfaction whatsoever can be obtained by ordinary and peaceable methods. It seems not to be generally understood that before Germany and England recently decreed a blockade of Venezuelan ports they sent an ultimatum to Venezuela, moderate in tone, offering to submit all doubtful and unadjudicated claims to arbitration. This request for arbitration, made in good faith, brought forth an evasive answer, an answer that has been made in substance many times before to similar representations, and one in which the element of straightforwardness was said to have been absent. England and Germany did not seize the custom-houses, refraining from this course, to some extent no doubt, in deference to our attitude and wishes. At least nothing bearing a resemblance to territorial occupation occurred.

Had a number of the custom-houses been seized temporarily and

moneys collected for the purpose of paying indemnities imposed by the allies as redress for grievances, no objection could have been taken to such a course by our government. The Monroe doctrine would not have been violated. But had the allies in Venezuela attempted to hold custom-houses, until all foreign claims of whatsoever nature had been satisfied and paid from customs receipts, it is quite safe to say that there might have resulted a good deal of popular anxiety in this country and very keen interest on the part of the government itself.

As money is thought to be the root of all evil, so it is one of the mainsprings of governmental activity, and no country can long exist without it. If a European nation, or a number of European nations acting together, were to take over and administer the customs and finances of a Latin-American country, contrary to the desire and will of its government, it would not require keen foresight to predict that in a few months the destiny of the country whose customs were being administered through foreign interposition would be in a large measure controlled by the agents of the alien creditors. In this wise, then, there might be evolved a situation fraught with danger to the peace of the world and full of menace to the spirit of the Monroe doctrine.

But we cannot deepen the meaning nor widen the scope of the Monroe doctrine without proportionately increasing our own responsibilities. The time may ultimately come when we shall have either to abandon some of our views respecting the Monroe doctrine or fight for them, and if I read aright the present disposition of the American people they will be slow to abandon any position they have taken in their international policy. Therefore, it behooves us to consider the Monroe doctrine in our most serious vein and to examine with scrupulous care every indication pointing to a change in its application and interpretation.

### *Problems of the Future.*

The future is pregnant with embarrassing possibilities. Up to the present time we have been too busy to do more than to guess at the potential dangers that confront us. Our government wisely attempts to cross no bridges before it reaches them. Yet its leaders scan the horizon and they are not blind to some of the problems the

future may hold. Suppose, to make concrete a single example, the recently much-discussed Acre territory, between Brazil and Bolivia, had been strong enough firmly to establish an independent government; suppose, then, the people of that state had invited one of the continental powers to send a governor-general to rule it as a colony, or as a protected state under the dominion of a European monarch; suppose, too, that the people of Acre, or a very large majority of them, ardently desired this transfer of sovereignty or dominion, and that it were to take place. What then would be the position and attitude of the United States?

Take another example: Suppose Venezuela, under the stress of poverty, were to sell or lease for a large and wholly satisfactory price the island of Marguerita to France for a period of ninety years, would we maintain that Venezuela was not within her sovereign rights in selling or alienating a portion of her territory if she so chose? Or, leaving Venezuela, let us suppose, if you please, that some more potent Latin-American nation decided to lease important islands or harbors to European powers for naval or coal-ing stations, and we determined to resist the execution of the lease, sale, or transfer. Should we not, in all probability, find our pretensions vigorously combated by two armed foes, each denying, from different points of view, our right to invoke the Monroe doctrine? Even these briefly suggested examples suffice to illumine the wide field of danger that may open before us when we shall attempt radically to alter the present meaning, scope or force of the Monroe doctrine.

### *Hostility to the Monroe Doctrine.*

You are doubtless aware that at this moment there is in the United States a small but earnest band of opponents to the idea of further extension of the Monroe doctrine. This opposing point of view can not justly be excluded from a serious and honest consideration of the subject as a whole, no matter how little one may be in sympathy with it. Those who describe themselves as opponents of the Monroe doctrine profess to think the formulated policy of Monroe, as such, has had its day; they believe that no European country harbors the smallest design of obtaining sovereignty over any part of Central or North America, and that there is nowhere any disposition



to interfere with republican government in the new hemisphere. In short, the disciples of this school sincerely believe that we are in as little danger from European aggression as Europe is in danger of attack from the United States. They declare, and not without reason, that the democratic form of government is more likely to spread throughout Europe than is monarchical government to gain a foothold in the New World. So they say, "Let us abandon the Monroe doctrine in so far as it means anything more than our inherent right to self-defence and preservation; let us leave our neighbors south of the Caribbean Sea to their own defence and destiny; let us not be a dog in the manger and try to prevent the development and settlement in South America of great colonies by European immigrants."

It is eloquently urged that enormous advantages would accrue to our commerce and export trade in South America were those countries to receive in the next twenty-five years ten or fifteen millions of settlers or colonists from the Old World. South America is thinly peopled. Nearly a century of fierce domestic warfare has impoverished several of its countries and repelled both foreign immigration and foreign capital. In consequence of this unhappy condition, which in some instances shows no signs of favorable change, the progress of certain of these countries is arrested, civilization halts, and the reign of bloodshed and anarchy continues. Their markets to-day are of slight importance to the world, because there is little money with which to buy and few people to make purchases. Let Holland, England, Germany or other European countries have free access to South America and enough control merely to secure peace and careful administration of the government finances, then countries that have for centuries been given up to devastating war will be transformed into vast producing and consuming communities. Foreign capital and immigrants would pour into them; their vast resources would be developed; the soil, the forests, the mines, the pastures and prairies, the power of the great waterfalls, would all be utilized; new and mighty markets for the surplus products of the factories and farms of the United States and Europe would be created; and, better than all this, the people would rise to a new life—they would be uplifted, redeemed and regenerated by the irresistible genius of established peace and its concurrent civilization.

Is not this our true course of action, it is asked? "Would it not be better for all concerned were we to follow these lines? Why leave these people to walk in darkness! Why interpose the Monroe doctrine between them and this vision of a substantial and splendid destiny! Why subject for another century the unhappy people of certain countries, a majority of whom would welcome any government that promises stability, to the desperate existence they now lead under the dominion of military dictators! Why maintain the deplorable sham and shadow of republican government, when we all know that the reality never even existed! It has been a mere pretense from the beginning; the people have never governed themselves. They have been misgoverned in spite of themselves. We are proposing to make greater the Monroe doctrine for the sake of republics which in reality do not exist and which every intelligent man knows do not exist. Is it not about time to end the farce? What has our attitude of benevolent protection and our long effort at cultivating warmer and closer relations with certain of our sister republics accomplished for the world and for humanity?

"What is the record of desirable, specific achievement? No one affirms that we have made life sweeter or better worth the living in any of the Latin-American countries. We have not caused order to prevail nor the arts and sciences to flourish. We have not caused settlers to come, the forests to be conquered, nor the soil to be tilled. Judged by our standard of living and education, some of these republics are just where they were centuries ago, when the Spaniard ruled them for his own profit and pleasure."

This is the iconoclastic view of the Monroe doctrine, and I dare say we shall hear more of it. The people who hold it would have the United States government police parts of Central America and, in a military and naval sense, the Caribbean Sea, and then give no further heed whatsoever to the world south of its uttermost shores. Let us be paramount, with due regard to our neighbors in Mexico and Canada, from Alaska to the equator, and then let us think no more about South America and its relations to the rest of the world, say the opponents of the Monroe doctrine.

In spite of the reasons set forth by Americans and Europeans who think this government ought to abandon the Monroe doctrine, or at least to modify its application, this old policy seems more firmly intrenched in the hearts of the people of the country to-day than it

ever was, and nowhere is there evidence of immediate or widespread change of attitude respecting it.

Our position is described at times as paramount or supreme on this hemisphere, and in a commercial sense at least we may without vanity affirm this to be true. There is no doubt about our power and the place we occupy among the nations of the New World any more than there is about the respect we command in the councils of the Old World; but fortunately our position of supremacy on this hemisphere does not rest wholly upon military power or possible exhibitions of force. The policy of the United States, its attitude toward the Latin-American republics, is one of helpfulness and kindly interest. Our rule of action in respect to them is, as Mr. Hay has happily said, the golden rule. We have been generous, tolerant and sympathetic in the past, and we intend to pursue this line of conduct in the future. We have responded cordially to appeals from certain countries upon more than one occasion. We have spent many millions of dollars in protecting our own citizens in turbulent countries. We have, following the dictates of humanity, given asylum to many distinguished Latin-American citizens, rescuing them from political foes, and we have sheltered and protected hundreds of helpless women and children and transferred them on our war vessels to ports of safety. We have charted harbors, made expensive soundings, and established buoys in the interest of navigation, and we have endeavored to improve sanitary conditions in many ways and in many ports. From some of the citizens in these countries we have received encouragement, assistance, intelligent appreciation and cordial approval.

On behalf of a southern republic we flung down a challenging gauntlet before one of the mightiest nations the world has known, and volunteered to take the risk of war with its dire consequences at a time when we were ill-prepared for defensive or offensive operations. The outcome, however, was fortunate in that instead of a retrograding war the progressive principle of arbitration was evoked and further strengthened.

These things that we have done show our good-will and our unselfish purposes. We have respected the law and sovereignty of every government when it was possible to do so. We have tried to help those who are our friends in Central and South America, and who wanted our help, to become strong and efficient common-

wealths. We want them to attain great prosperity and power. We wish all of our neighbors well, and we want them to be plenteously endowed with the blessings of peace. No republic to the south of us can become too rich or too self-sustaining to suit the kindly purposes of this country. We want everywhere the spirit of genuine liberty to be alive among the people. We want to feel that they are profiting by what is good, noble and true in our national life. In this sense we hope to be paramount. We want all of the American republics to know that honest toil is dignified and ennobling. We want them to entertain a spirit of toleration in all matters and to understand that in union there is strength, and to know, too, that the genius of our civilization is individual development and endeavor. We want the ideas of civil and religious liberty and free education to have wide scope and abundant appreciation. We desire all of our Latin-American friends heartily to join us in supporting, urging and vitalizing the principle of international arbitration.

In these peaceful ways we may endeavor to Americanize the New World and perhaps the Old, not by the conquering power of the almighty dollar, not by manifestations of force, but rather by the dissemination of those lofty, civilizing agencies, those great principles, those fine ideals, those spiritual forces upon which our country was founded and upon which it has lived and had its being.